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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 001754

SIPDIS

CENTCOM FOR J5, POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/23/2013

TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [IT](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [IT](#) [IZ](#) [IZMARR](#) [IRAQI](#) [FREEDOM](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY MOVING TO GET PROCESS RIGHT ON FIELD

HOSPITAL DEPLOYMENT CORRECTED COPY - PARA 8

ADDITIONAL/PLEASE DISREGARD ROME 1753

REF: A. ROME 1660

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[B](#). ROME 1701

CLASSIFIED BY: A/DCM TOM COUNTRYMAN FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) THE ITALIAN MFA, WHICH NOMINALLY HAS THE LEAD ON ITALY'S HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE EFFORTS IN IRAQ, IS SEEKING TO DEPLOY IMMEDIATELY A 27-BED ICRC FIELD HOSPITAL TO BAGHDAD (REF A). AMBASSADOR BADINI, DIRECTOR OF THE GOI'S IRAQ TASK FORCE, TOLD A/DCM ON APRIL 24 THAT ITALY REQUESTED AUTHORIZATION TO FLY AN ANTONOV AIRCRAFT CARRYING HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT INTO BAGHDAD ON APRIL 28.

[1](#)2. (C) A/DCM TOLD BADINI THAT BAGHDAD AIRPORT WAS NOT OPEN FOR BUSINESS. CENTCOM HAD INFORMED THE EMBASSY THAT AIR TRANSPORT WAS NOT A FEASIBLE OPTION FOR THE TIME BEING. A/DCM SUGGESTED THAT THE MFA CONSIDER MOVING THE HOSPITAL IN THROUGH KUWAIT OR AMMAN. EITHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR OVERLAND TRAVEL WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE OR THE GOI'S TASK FORCE COULD WAIT UNTIL BAGHDAD AIRPORT WAS UP AND RUNNING. BADINI OBJECTED THAT ITALY DID NOT HAVE ANY VEHICLES POSITIONED IN EITHER KUWAIT OR JORDAN TO DO THE JOB. EXPRESSING SOME DEGREE OF FRUSTRATION, HE SAID THAT IF THE USG ULTIMATELY DID NOT WANT THE HOSPITAL IN BAGHDAD, THE TASK FORCE WOULD NOT SEND IT TO ANOTHER LOCATION IN IRAQ.

[1](#)3. (C) A/DCM REITERATED THAT THE GOI'S NUMBER ONE PRIORITY SHOULD BE WORKING ITS EFFORTS TO DEPLOY A FIELD HOSPITAL THROUGH THE CENTCOM PLANNING CELL -- SPECIFICALLY VIA THE ITALIAN LNO, GENERAL SANTINI. WITHOUT CENTCOM APPROVAL, IT WAS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH WORKING THE OPERATIONAL DETAILS NECESSARY TO REALIZE THE PROJECT.

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BADINI STATED THAT AN MFA SITE SURVEY TEAM CURRENTLY IN BAGHDAD HAD RECEIVED A GREEN LIGHT TO DEPLOY THE HOSPITAL IN BAGHDAD FROM GENERAL BLOUNT. A/DCM URGED BADINI TO RELAY THIS INFORMATION TO SANTINI, SO THAT PLANNING CELLS IN TAMPA COULD GIVE BLOUNT'S STATEMENTS FULL WEIGHT IN THEIR DECISION ON LOCATION OF THE HOSPITAL. BADINI COMPLAINED THAT THE LNO CHANNEL WAS BROKEN AND THEREFORE HE LACKED CONFIDENCE IN IT. A/DCM AGREED THE CHANNEL WASN'T WORKING, BUT SAID THE ONLY OPTION WAS TO FIX IT, NOT CIRCUMVENT IT.

EMBASSY COMMENT

[1](#)4. (C) EMBASSY HAS DEVOTED THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS TO GETTING THE MINISTRIES OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO GIVE GEN. SANTINI MORE INFORMATION AND AUTHORITY TO ADDRESS NOT ONLY PURELY MILITARY BUT ALSO THE HUMANITARIAN DEPLOYMENTS INTO IRAQ. OUR EFFORTS MAY BE PAYING OFF. LATE APRIL 24, MINDEF MARTINO'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISER TOLD A/DCM THAT MOD HAD JUST REACHED AGREEMENT WITH AMB. BADINI THAT MFA WOULD TRANSMIT FULL OPERATIONAL DETAILS ON THE HOSPITAL DEPLOYMENT TO THE DEFENSE STAFF, WHICH WILL PASS IT ON TO SANTINI WITH ORDERS TO WORK OUT ALL REMAINING DETAILS (I.E., NOT ONLY PURELY MILITARY ASPECTS). IN ADDITION, THE GOI WILL SEEK TO DOUBLE-TRACK THE INFORMATION THROUGH AMB. ANTONIO ARMELLINI, THEIR NEWLY APPOINTED LIAISON TO OHRA, WHO SHOULD BE IN KUWAIT SHORTLY. WE ARE NOW CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THAT CENTCOM PLANNERS WILL SEE SOON A MORE INFORMED AND FORTHCOMING GEN. SANTINI.

[1](#)5. (C) THE EMBASSY IS FULLY AWARE OF AND GREATLY APPRECIATES  
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CENTCOM'S EFFORTS TO FACILITATE AND EXPEDITE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE IRAQI PEOPLE THAT ITALY AND OTHER COUNTRIES ARE TRYING TO MAKE AVAILABLE. IT IS A DIFFICULT TASK MADE MORE COMPLICATED WHEN COUNTRIES DO NOT FOLLOW ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES. NEVERTHELESS, WE ARE ALSO CONVINCED THAT ITALY IS TRYING TO DO THE RIGHT THING, AND THEREFORE WANT TO UNDERScore THREE REASONS WHY IT MAKES SENSE TO ALLOW THE GOI TO DEPLOY THEIR HOSPITAL IN BAGHDAD, EVEN IF THE LOCATION IDENTIFIED BY THE GOI IS NOT THE AREA WHERE THE HOSPITAL IS MOST URGENTLY NEEDED.

16. (C) THE GOI CHOSE THE LOCATION BETWEEN THE AL NOUMAN GENERAL HOSPITAL AND THE KHEDIMIA PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL (NEAR SADDAM CITY) BECAUSE IT HAS PRIOR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH THOSE HEALTH FACILITIES (REF A). SITING A FIELD HOSPITAL THERE OPENS THE WAY FOR ITALY TO REESTABLISH A LONG-TERM "SPONSORING" RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TWO PERMANENT HOSPITALS WHICH WILL PERSIST AFTER ITS TEMPORARY FACILITY IS REMOVED. MOREOVER, AS WE STRESSED IN REF B, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROVIDES THE GOI WITH JUSTIFICATION FOR PUTTING ITS PROPOSED 1700-2000 BOOTS ON THE GROUND TO DO PHASE IV PEACEKEEPING AND MSU-TYPE WORK. THE VISIBLE PRESENCE OF THE HEALTH FACILITY

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ACTION PM-00

INFO	LOG-00	COR-01	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SRPP-00	EB-00
	EUR-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00
	AC-01	NEA-00	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00
	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	PRM-00	DRL-01	G-00	SAS-00

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O 241843Z APR 03  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9411  
INFO JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

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WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE GOI TO MUSTER PARLIAMENTARY AND PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR A MILITARY DEPLOYMENT.

17. (C) FINALLY, ALTHOUGH WE NOT PLEASED WITH THE MFA'S HANDLING OF OPERATIONAL DETAILS, WE ARE ENCOURAGED THAT IT TRIED TO RESPOND RAPIDLY TO OUR ORIGINAL, URGENTLY-CONVEYED REQUEST FOR A FIELD HOSPITAL. THE MFA WILLINGNESS TO GET ITS HANDS DIRTY ON A TOUGH OPERATIONAL ISSUE THAT THE USG IDENTIFIED AS A TOP PRIORITY SHOULD NOT BE DISCOURAGED. DESPITE THE BUREAUCRATIC HASSLES SO FAR, WE ACTUALLY SEE TREMENDOUS PROGRESS IN GOI COORDINATION OF ITS MILITARY/CIVILIAN/HUMANITARIAN BRANCHES, AN ASSET UPON WHICH WE WILL CERTAINLY SEEK TO DRAW AGAIN IN THE FUTURE.

18. (U) EMBASSY WILL BE CLOSED FOR BUSINESS ON APRIL 25 FOR AN ITALIAN NATIONAL HOLIDAY, BUT A/DCM TOM COUNTRYMAN AND POL-MIL OFFICER TODD EBITZ WILL BE AVAILABLE VIA THE EMBASSY SWITCHBOARD (TEL. 39.06.46741).

SEMBLER

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